

A Monthly from the East African Sustainability Watch Network founded by Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development (UCSD), Tanzania Coalition for Sustainable Development (TCSD) and SusWatch Kenya

Outcome from the UN Climate Talks in Katowice Applauded and Critiqued



Michal Kurtyka – President (COP24) jumped over his desk at final session; Demonstrators outside and inside the Conference facility in Katowice (Photos: *New York Times*, *The Morning Express* and JMorgan)

After two weeks of climate change talks (COP24) in Katowice (Poland), officials from nearly 200 nations reached an agreement on a set of rules to implement the 2015 Paris climate agreement. The Agreement aims to deliver the Paris Agreement goals of limiting global temperature rises to less than 2 degree Celsius.

But like the landmark 2015 Agreement in Paris, it does not bind countries to hit their targets. And observers questioned whether it was sufficient given the extraordinary stakes.

However, according to the United Nations Climate Change (UNFCCC), the agreed ‘Katowice Climate Package’ is designed to change regime Agreement. Under the Secretariat, it will cooperation and ambition. The into themes such as how monitor their national greenhouse gas emissions and update their emissions plans (NDCs).

Concern: The UN talks failed to align ambitions with science. We continue to follow a path that will take us to a very dangerous 3-4C warmer world within this century - Johan Rockstrom

operationalize the climate contained in the Paris auspices of the UNFCCC promote international encourage greater ‘Package’ is broken down countries will report and pledges to curb

It also includes guidelines that will operationalize the transparency framework, guidelines that relate to the process for establishing new targets on finance from 2025 onwards to follow-on from the current target of mobilizing USD 100 billion per year from 2020 to support developing countries; how to conduct the Global Stock take of the effectiveness of climate action in 2023; and how to assess progress on the development and transfer of technology.

At the Adoption of the ‘Package,’ the President of COP24, Mr. Michal Kurtyka (Poland), said: “All nations have worked tirelessly. All nations showed their commitment. All nations can leave Katowice with a sense of pride, knowing that their efforts have paid off. The guidelines contained in the Katowice Climate Package provide the basis for implementing the agreement as of 2020”. But according to Thomson Reuters News agency, ministers managed to break a deadlock between Brazil and other countries over the accounting rules for the monitoring of carbon credits, deferring the bulk of that discussion to next year, but missing an opportunity to send a signal to businesses to speed up their actions.

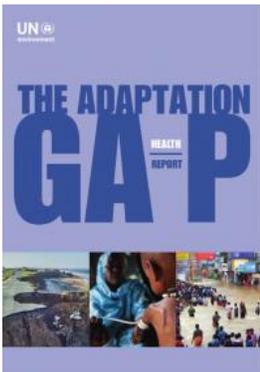
Similarly, leading figures in climate science and economics (quoted by *The Guardian*) said much more must be done, and quickly, to stave off the prospect of dangerous levels of global warming. Nicholas Stern, the former World Bank chief economist and author of a seminal review of the economics of climate change, said: “It is clear that the progress we are making is inadequate, given the scale and urgency of the risks we face. The latest figures show carbon dioxide emissions are still rising. A much more attractive, clean and efficient path for economic development and poverty reduction is in our hands.”

Johan Rockstrom, director designate at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, said: “My biggest concern is that the UN talks failed to align ambitions with science. We continue to follow a path that will take us to a very dangerous 3-4C warmer world within this century. Extreme weather events hit people across the planet already, at only 1C of warming.”

The text establishing a large part of a planned carbon trading system was dashed after Brazil, one of the world’s leading greenhouse gas producers, blocked proposals for counting certain emissions. Brazil led a push for lenient rules that other nations said would weaken the system, which is intended to incentivize emissions cuts by creating a market price. With negotiators unable to reach a deal, the issue was punted until next year — a move that Boston College environmental law professor David Wirth (quoted by *The Washington Post*) said could “delay or undermine confidence among the private sector in undertaking climate-friendly investments — one of the most important purposes of the Paris Rulebook.”

Link to the signed off Rulebook with zero brackets and options remaining: <https://bit.ly/2Ep1fEX> and Carbon Brief’s analysis of the Katowice Outcome here: <https://bit.ly/2rE6t83>

UN Environment Adaptation Gap Report Points out a funding gap to deal with climate related impacts in developing countries.



While climate consciousness across the globe is on the rise, the fourth UN Environment Adaptation Gap Report 2018 released at COP24 in Katowice (Poland) December 6, 2018, revealed a considerable gap between countries’ preparedness for climate change and the actual measures needed to prepare communities for a future of increasing climate risks.

The Adaptation Gap Report identifies what is urgently needed to further narrow the adaptation gap in health, both today and in the future, is political will and the necessary financial resources to implement the most important actions related to climate resilient health systems; early warning systems and a broader development agenda aimed at reducing vulnerability to climate-sensitive health risks, particularly infectious diseases and food and nutritional insecurity.

Part of this Report focuses on the adaptation gap in the health sector with specific focus on three key areas of climate-related health risks: heat and extreme events, climate-sensitive infectious diseases, and food and nutritional security.

With regard to international climate finance, the Report notes that this has been negligible to health. While in principle, most of the financing mechanisms and funds for adaptation apply to health adaptation as well, so far the overall presence of health-sector activities in international climate adaptation finance stands at less than one percent. Additional resources are therefore needed to increase the resilience of health systems, including health facilities, and to build the capacities of health professionals to deal with climate-related impacts, particularly in developing countries. The Report makes recommendations on bridging the adaptation gap in health. **Read the UN Adaptation Report 2018 from here: <https://bit.ly/2G1Sgqz>**

Fivefold Effort Needed to achieve the 1.5oC Temperature Target – UN Environment Emissions Gap Report (2018)



The UN Emissions Gap Report was launched December 11, 2018 at COP24 in Katowice. The annual Report presents an assessment of current national mitigation efforts and the ambitions countries have presented in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), which form the foundation of the Paris Agreement. It presents a definitive assessment of the so-called 'emissions gap' – the gap between anticipated emission levels in 2030, compared to levels consistent with a 2°C / 1.5°C target.

The Report includes an assessment of the emissions associated with the NDCs and current policies of each of the G20 members, including the European Union. This is in addition to presenting an update on global greenhouse gas emissions and national actions to meet the earlier Cancun pledges.

There is an enormous gap between what we need to do and what we're actually doing to prevent dangerous levels of climate change. But surging momentum from the private sector and untapped potential from innovation and green-financing offer pathways to bridge the emissions gap. Those findings along with a sweeping review of climate action and the latest measurements of global emissions were presented by authors of the 2018 Emissions Gap Report during the launch event.

Evidence outlined in the Report shows that global emissions have reached historic levels at 53.5 Giga tones of CO₂ Equivalent (1Gt = 1000000000000 kg), with no signs of peaking – the point when emissions switch from increasing to decreasing. Authors assessed that only 57 countries (representing 60 percent of global emissions) are on track to do so by 2030.

That analysis and a review of progress against national commitments under the Paris Agreement makes clear that the current pace of national action is insufficient to meet the Paris targets. Increased emissions and lagging action means the gap number in this year's report is larger than ever. Translated into climate action, the authors conclude nations must raise their ambition by 3times to meet the 2°C and 5times to meet 1.5°C.

A continuation of current trends will likely result in global warming of around 3°C by the end of the century (2030), with continued temperature rises after that, according to the report findings. While the authors highlight that there is still a possibility for bridging the emissions gap and keeping global warming below 2°C, the assessment issues a clear warning: The kind of drastic, large-scale action we urgently need has yet to be seen.

To fill this void, the Report offers new insight into what meaningful climate action will look like. Through new analysis of global emissions in the context of fiscal policy, the current pace of innovation and an exhaustive review of climate action from the private sector and sub-national level, authors offer a roadmap for implementing the type of transformative action required to maximize potential in key sectors.

Ranging from city, state and regional governments to companies, investors, higher education institutions and civil society organizations, non-state actors are increasingly committing to bold climate action. These institutions are increasingly recognized as a key element in achieving the global emissions goals. Although estimates on the emission reduction potential vary widely, some mention 19 gigatonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (GtCO₂e) by 2030. This is enough to close the 2°C gap.

Read the UN Emissions Gap Report 2018 from here: <https://bit.ly/2KsiXrW>